

February 2003

Information Update from the Office of the Chief, Navy Medical Corps

The following information is submitted for your information. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Chief, Medical Corps (202-762-3060/3063/3062/ DSN: 762-3060/3063/3062). Please disseminate this information as widely as possible.

1. **Combat Zone Tax Relief** – When serving in a combat zone, tax exemption for officers is capped at \$5882.70 per month i.e. the most senior enlisted base pay amount plus \$150 of imminent danger/hostile fire pay. This cap is statutory under 26 USC 121 (Internal Revenue Code). Officer bonuses can only be included in the tax relief to the extent that base pay plus whatever amount of bonus takes the total amount up to \$5882.70 for that month. DFAS has to apply the cap. For enlisted service members, the tax exclusion covers reenlistment bonuses, continuation pays, etc. only if the agreement for those pays and bonuses occurred while the individual served in a designated combat zone. Service members are reminded to closely watch their Leave and Earnings Statement to ensure that their pays are correct when serving in a combat zone. Attached to this e-mail is a copy of the 2002 Military Tax Guide.
2. **Combat Zone Educational Loan Relief** – It was found that some educational loans provide payment relief when a service member serves in a combat zone. If a service member thinks they might be eligible for such relief, he/she should contact the servicer of their student loan, discuss their specific situation and obtain contact information for the company. They must then contact the Department of Education at 1-800-433-3243 and ask for "Borrow Tracking." Cases are worked on a case by case basis.
3. **Critical Skills Retention Bonus (CSRB)** – DFAS is in the process of paying the CSRB to those who initiated an amended contract. Because each contract has to be hand entered, it will take several weeks before everyone is paid. Please be patient. DFAS was involved in getting W-4 forms out to everyone and the process of paying the CSRB was subsequently delayed.
4. **Medical Reserve Utilization Plan (MEDRUP)** – This is a system that has been in use for the past year in which requests for Reserve support from Claimancy 18 and Nonclaimancy 18 commands can be entered and tracked. As soon as a need for Reserve support is recognized, Claimancy 18 commands should send a request to BUMED M3M1 for validation and identification of a qualified Reservist. Nonclaimancy 18 commands should send their request to N931 for approval, which then sends the request to M3M1 for validation. The greater the lead time, the greater the success of finding a Reservist. The MEDRUP instruction can be found at <http://navymedicine.med.navy.mil/medrup/>.
5. **Cancellation of Surgeon General's Specialty Leader Conference** – Because of wartime requirements and deployments, the Surgeon General's Specialty Leader Conference originally scheduled for 1-3 April has been cancelled. We regret any inconvenience this may cause.

6. DoD Pharmacoeconomic Center (PEC)- Just a reminder that the PEC actively seeks input from prescribing providers. If asked for an opinion, please encourage your communities to respond. Information from the DoD Pharmacoeconomic Center is available at: http://www.pec.ha.osd.mil/Updates/0302web/Nov-Dec_02_Update_Page_1.htm
7. CO/XO Screening Survey – In the next several weeks, a survey request form will be sent to all 0-6 Medical Corps Officers asking if they want to be screened for CO and XO positions. As soon as the list of newly selected 0-6 officers is released, they too, will receive a copy of the survey. Please have your 0-6 Medical Officers return the survey with both positive and negative responses. Positive replies will require a CO's endorsement commenting upon the individual's leadership abilities. A copy of the survey is attached to this e-mail, should we not have a current address for someone in your command or community.
8. Pay Problems: Please remind your staff, especially those serving as sponsors for individuals newly reporting for duty in the Navy, that in order to establish a new pay record the following must be received at BUPERS Code 822:
 - a. Officer's Oath of Office form (the form they sign to accept their rank) for their current rank and for their rank as an Ensign if coming from an HPSP or USUHS accession program.
 - b. G-02 Form (this is a form that PSD initiates which essentially says that the officer has checked on board).
 - c. Copy of the officer's DD-214 (Discharge Paper) if the officer had prior active duty service.

The above documents must be faxed to BUPERS Code 822 at 901-874-2622. Please ensure that there are current contact numbers and/or e-mail address(es) to contact the officer should there be any questions by the BUPERS staff. The Point of Contact BUPERS for questions at 901-874-3241/ DSN: 882-3241.

9. CONGRATULATIONS!!
 - A. NH Guantanamo Bay received the Department of Defense TRICARE Management Activity Customer Satisfaction Award in recognition of its service excellence to active duty members.
 - B. Mathew J. Bourgeois Force Health Protection Muddy Boots Award to NH Pensacola in recognition of its many initiatives in support of force health protection, including increasing TRICARE Prime Enrollment, open access appointments, advancements in perinatal care and seamless mobilization and demobilization of Reserve forces.
 - C. NH Pensacola was awarded the prestigious Picker Institute Award, for being the top hospital in the area of "continuity of transition of care" in the 11 health systems and over 122 hospitals that participate. NH Pensacola is now the "benchmark" for others to follow in this area of healthcare and customer satisfaction.